

***NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE INSTRUCTION 10-925
SEPTEMBER 4, 2003***

***Operations and Services
Hydrologic Services Program, NWSPD 10-9***

***GUIDELINES FOR WEATHER FORECAST OFFICE
HYDROLOGIC SERVICE MANUALS***

NOTICE: This publication is available at: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/directives/>

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SUMMARY OF REVISIONS: This directive supersedes NWS Instruction 10-925, dated September 17, 2002. The following revisions were made to this instruction:

- (1) Created separate section listing recipients of the hydrologic services manual, and added WFOs providing hydrologic backup to that list.
- (2) Added requirement to list procedures for contacting supporting river forecast center(s)
- (3) Added requirement to delineate which forecast points in the hydrologic service area fall into the small- and large-scale categories as defined in NWS Instruction 10-921.

Signed

August 21, 2003

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Date

Guidelines for Weather Forecast Office Hydrologic Service Manuals

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1. Introduction. The hydrologic services manual describes current hydrologic services of a weather forecast office (WFO) and is part of a station duty manual (SDM). For records retention purposes, out-of-date copies of a hydrologic services manual are kept for the same period as SDMs – 5 years.

2. Recipients. A copy of a WFO’s hydrologic services manual will be made available to the following:

- a. Manager in charge of hydrologic services at regional headquarters,
- b. Hydrologist in Charge at each supporting river forecast center (RFC), and
- c. Meteorologist in Charge at each WFO providing primary and secondary backup support.

3. Manual Structure. As a minimum, the hydrologic services manual should include a title page with the name of the manual preparer, date of preparation, and date(s) of subsequent updates and information outlined in the following sections.

3.1 Section 1 - Hydrology Program Personnel. Provide a list of WFO personnel to contact when normal hydrologic procedures are insufficient for handling a hydrologic emergency. Include the service hydrologist or hydrology focal point and members of the WFO management team and/or other members of the office hydrology team. If the WFO does not have a service hydrologist, include the name and phone number of the service hydrologist from a nearby WFO who is designated to provide support for the office.

Also, describe procedures for contacting each RFC serving the WFO.

3.2 Section 2 - Description of Hydrologic Service Area. Provide a graphical and textual description of the WFO hydrologic service area (HSA), including:

- a. Maps of the HSA supplementing those available on the advanced weather interactive processing system (AWIPS);
- b. Description of differences (if any) between the HSA and WFO county warning area (CWA) boundaries;
- c. Physiographic description of the HSA, including important topographic features;
- d. Description of HSA climatology;
- e. Description of the nature of flood events in the HSA, including known seasonal variations;
- f. Description of the forecast points in the HSA and the type of service provided for each location (including AHPS products) – also designate whether each forecast point falls in the small-scale and large-scale category (see NWS Instruction 10-921, section 3.1.2);
- g. Summary of major historical flood events in the HSA.

3.3 Section 3 - Hydrologic Partners and Customers. Provide a list of partners and customers along with contact names, telephone numbers, and addresses. Include instructions for emergency communications. Document the interest customers and partners have in particular area(s), stream(s), or forecast point(s). Identify key personnel responsible for operational maintenance of stream gaging stations (e.g., U.S. Geological Survey and reservoir/dam operators), including numbers of portable phones (if any) where they can be reached in the field.

3.4 Section 4 - Hydrologic Forecast Operations. If the WFO produces site-specific hydrologic forecast products, briefly describe categories used, partner/customer service requirements, sequential steps for forecast preparation, and hydrologic circumstances under which products are issued (e.g., during high waters only, seasonal, or year-round). Address the role of supporting RFC(s), including RFC forecast/guidance products used by the WFO, the WFO/RFC forecast coordination process, and exchanges of database updates between the offices.

3.5 Section 5 - Flood/Flash Flood Forecasting Operations. Briefly describe the steps to be followed in assessing the current hydrologic state of the HSA and in preparing flood/flash flood products. Document office-specific procedures for verification of flood and flash flood events.

3.6 Section 6 - Appendices. Include a bibliography of publications pertaining to general hydrologic characteristics, rivers, and floods in the HSA. Include other material deemed appropriate for the manual as appendices.